



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Coconino
National
Forest

Mogollon Rim
Ranger District

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File Code: 2230
Date: February 18, 2005

Clifford and Tammy Finch
P.O. Box 1038
Camp Verde, AZ 86322

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Finch:

This letter is the 2005 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment; this is for the 2005 grazing season - a period of March 1, 2005 to February 28, 2006.

Your 2005 annual authorized use grazing application dated November 29, 2004, was approved for 355 head of cattle and 10 head of horses for the entire year. Partial nonuse (Class II Non-Use) is approved for resource protection due to drought conditions. The Forest commends your voluntary reduction in permitted grazing livestock to insure that the Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment's rangeland resources are protected and sustained for the long-term. The following is a table listing the scheduled rotation of pastures on your allotments for the 2005 grazing season.

2005 PASTURE ROTATIONSCHEDULE

PASTURE NAME	GRAZE DATES	LIVESTOCK NUMBERS	PERCENT ALLOWABLE USE
MAIN COW HERD			
HACKBERRY	3/26-4/30	285	50
DORENS	5/1-5/10	285	50
BASIN	5/11-5/23	340	50
PARTNERSHIP	5/24-5/26	340	50
SANDROCK	5/27-5/31	340	50
CALLOWAY	6/1-6/15	340	50
TOMS CREEK	6/16- 7/10	340	50
WEST BED BUG	7/11-7/15	340	50
NECK #1	7/16-7/21	340	50
NECK # 2-3	7/22-7/31	340	50
BALD MESA (ALL)	8/1-8/16	340	50
SHIPPING	8/17-8/19	340	50
DRY LAKE	8/20-8/24	340	50
CLEAR CREEK	8-25-8/26	340	50
MILLER	8/27-9/7	340	50
KEHL	9/8-10/4	340	50
CLEAR CREEK	10/5-10/6	340	50
DRY LAKE	10/7-10/9	340	50

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment AOI 2005

PASTURE NAME	GRAZE DATES	LIVESTOCK NUMBERS	PERCENT ALLOWABLE USE
EAST BED BUG	10/10-10/17	340	50
SANDROCK	10/18-10/24	340	50
BASIN	10/25-11/8	340	50
PHRONEY	11/9-11/12	340	50
HACKBERRY	11/13-12/15	340	50
BULL RUN	12/16-1/18	340	50
LOWER TOWEL	1/19-2/22	340	50
MIDDLE TOWELL	2/23-3/4	340	50
HEIFER HERD			
PIPELINE	1/24-3/15	55	50
TEEPEE	3/16-3/27	55	50
DOG LEG	3/28-4/10	55	50
LADDERS	4/11-5/11	55	50

GRAZING STRATEGY

For Hackberry/Pivot Rock's yearlong permit - continue to graze livestock in an intensive rest half/graze half management strategy on alternate years in the allotment's high elevation summer ranges, with the transition (during drought conditions only) and winter ranges managed in an intensive deferred-rest rotation. Allowable use for the allotment is 50%. Permitted livestock (cow/calf/heifer/bull) will be run together as a single herd. Annually, spring branding and culling occurs in early June; with fall culling and shipping of stock to market taking place in late September, followed by the year's final culling and shipping in the last week of January.

The management of livestock pasture moves will continue to be based upon a plant forage phenology scheme of management. Winter range pastures grazed during the winter dormancy period will not exceed a time period of 30 days. In contrast, the allotment's summer range pastures that are grazed during the forage's active growing seasons the livestock graze period per pasture is shortened to periods of approximately 15 to 20 days.

The yearlong allotment's proper allowable use is 50% average use on pastures used by livestock, with the exception being 20% on woody species within the Neck 4 pasture, which is being used by your allotment saddle horses, (see preceding Grazing Schedule Table). This grazing intensity coupled with the rested pastures will maintain ground cover to protect soils and maintain or improve quantity and quality of desired vegetation for proper rangeland and watershed conditions.

The allotment's summer season's permit will be grazed in a deferred rotation grazing system for the five month season. Allowable use is set for 50 percent average pasture utilization. The herd this year was approved for a cow/calf, with bulls remaining with the cow herd season long, as a single herd. Culling and shipping of this Unit's herd will occur in October.

Livestock pasture moves will be completed with a five (5) day period. Gathering and movement of your permitted livestock should be completed during this five (5) day period. And it is imperative that once pasture moves occur, the livestock remain within the designated pasture. For various reasons, (i.e. pasture gates are left open, cattleguards are not maintained, fences are cut, etc.), cattle may stray from pasture to pasture. Prevention of stray livestock is the permittee's responsibility; thereby preventing grazing of adjacent allotments, grazing of your allotment's rested pastures, or regrazing of

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment AOI 2005

previously used pastures. Prevention of stray livestock protects the rangeland resources and the well being of your stock.

SALTING AND SUPPLEMENTAL FEE POLICY

Your Term Grazing Permit - Part 3, Page 8 clearly states the Forest Salting and Supplemental Feed Policies. Our range management objectives must be to place salt and supplements to attract stock away from waters and concentration areas, drawing livestock into areas of no or light utilization where ample forage and ground cover supports grazing. Also see the specific grazing mitigation for salting as described within the next paragraph.

GRAZING MITIGATION MEASURES

We will have to coordinate livestock movements to ensure that a journey level fisheries biologist surveys East Clear Creek at the two designated crossings for Little Colorado spinedace before cattle cross at these points. The first crossing is between the Clear Creek and Miller Pastures and the second is between the Kehl and Clear Creek Pastures. The first crossing is scheduled on August 27, and the second is scheduled on October 5. Please contact the Ranger District well before you are scheduled to cross so that we will be able to have these surveys done in a timely manner

The Neck 4 Pasture is not to be used by cattle because of concerns regarding willow and cottonwood regeneration. You are permitted to use this as a horse pasture until and if grazing utilization monitoring notes 5 % use on woody plant species like willow and cottonwood regeneration or a proper allowable use of 50% on perennial forage species – which ever threshold comes first.

Attached are mitigation measures for the Peregrine falcon and the Mexican spotted owl. Please review these attachments and understand what actions are required by you for grazing permit and allotment management plan compliance.

RESOURCE MONITORING

The Forest Service has installed forage utilization monitoring cages on this grazing allotment. Where possible, the cages were located within the following four Management Areas (MA's) and they include: MA 12 (riparian); MA 5 (aspen); MA 9 (mountain meadow) and MA 3 (ponderosa pine/oak). Consequently, cages will be installed in the following areas for monitoring:

<u>PASTURE NAME</u>	<u>MANAGEMENT AREA</u>
Miller (Riparian)	12
Kehl (Mtn. Grassland)	09
Kehl (aspen)	05
Miller (ponderosa pine)	03
Huffer (riparian)	12
East Bedbug (Mtn. Grassland)	09
Potato South (aspen)	05
Potato North (ponderosa pine)	03

These forage monitoring cages were installed in representative "key area" locations on productive soils, 0 to 15% slopes, approximately 20 to 500 acres in size, and minimum of 0.25 to 1.0 miles away from livestock water sources. The cages will monitor forage utilization on designated "key species" in "key areas" during three crucial periods of the grazing season: immediately before livestock entry; immediately after the livestock graze; and lastly at the end of the forage growing season

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment AOI 2005

The livestock enclosures around Cottonwood and Mesquite Springs must be monitored if cattle are in the Mesquite Springs pasture. Please contact us if you find problems with the integrity of these enclosures.

A Forage Utilization Spreadsheet, attached, will be completed by the grazing permittee during this 2005 grazing season. This monitoring will be completed by the ranch personnel with instruction and review from the District's Range Staff Officers. The spreadsheet, identifies: individual pasture; pasture graze period; actual use livestock numbers; stage of plant growth, (fast, slow, dormant); average utilization of all forage species by pasture before livestock entry, following livestock graze and end of growing season; and identification of the pasture's "key species" and average grazing utilization percentage within the pasture's "key area(s)". The permittee will document the individual pasture's forage utilization percentage estimates by five categories of use; no use, light, moderate, heavy and extreme. Continue to implement and monitor grazing utilization standards to attain good to excellent range conditions over time.

The monitoring of forage utilization by livestock and wildlife ungulates in the above management areas will provide an assessment of the allotment's grazing management, and permitted livestock, plus the numbers, wildlife big-game ungulates and their distribution. If upward utilization trends are observed, the District will coordinate with the grazing permittee and/or the Arizona Game and Fish Department to bring use within the Forest Land Management Plan's guidelines to promote and improve range and watershed conditions.

The allotments riparian and open water areas within East Clear Creek proper have been fenced to control livestock grazing use and management. However, these very important and diverse areas will still be closely monitored by the District Range Staff and the permittee to insure proper allowable use is met and where necessary grazing is restricted. The District will coordinate with you to improve and maintain riparian vegetative communities by promoting three age classes of woody vegetation. A 20% or less utilization of woody species is acceptable as all three classes of riparian vegetation are present

RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

No new range improvements are scheduled for your allotment in the 2005 grazing season. "Permittee Maintenance Responsibilities of Range Improvements" have been identified in red color on the permit maps of your term grazing permit. These improvements are to be fully maintained annually as a minimum, to comply with permit requirements. Please notify the District Range Staff Officer, 60 days prior any maintenance of improvements where heavy-duty equipment is required, i.e. maintenance of earthen-dam stock tanks, because biological and cultural surveys and clearances are required.

APPEAL RIGHTS

Grazing permittees have appeal rights. Annual Operating Plan is appealable and subject to review under 36 CFR 251.82(a) (3), grazing and livestock term permits issued under 36 CFR part 222, subpart A. Appealable decisions apply to written decisions of Forest Service line officers related to issuance, denial, or administration of written instructions to comply and use National Forest System lands.

PERMIT COMPLIANCE

These 2005 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) are a part of the Term Grazing Permit, as provided for in Part 2, section 8(a). If you fail to comply with any of the terms and conditions of specified in Parts 1, 2, and 3 of your Term Grazing permit, the Forest Service may suspend or cancel your permit, in part or in whole, after written notice to you. This is found within Part 1, Section 3, of your Term Grazing Permit. This AOI is in compliance with the standards and guidelines found within the Coconino National Forest's Land Management Plan.

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment AOI 2005

These Annual Operating Instructions have been reviewed by the District wildlife biologists and found consistent with the endangered species Act, as amended and with all conditions agreed to in consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

WILDLAND FIRE PREVENTION

Caution must be used during all ranch activities that could potentially start a fire. All ranch vehicles must be equipped with an axe, shovel, and water bucket. Any internal combustion engine tools and equipment require inspection by qualified Forest fire personnel prior to use on National Forest Lands. All open camp and branding fires require a ten foot fire ring cleared down to mineral soils. All state and local fire restrictions and regulations must be observed. Report all fires to the Ranger District Offices at: Beaver Creek/Sedona (928/282-4119), Happy Jack (928/354-2216), Blue Ridge (928/477-2255) and the Flagstaff Zone Dispatch Office at (928/526-0600).

PRESCRIBED BURNING

The Bald Mesa Prescribed Burning Project is scheduled for your allotment this year. This project is scheduled to begin in September 2005 in Neck 2, Bald 2, 3 and 4 Pastures of your allotment. Our proceeding grazing rotation schedule indicates that livestock grazing will occur in July and August 2005 and no conflict of interest is anticipated with these two resource activities. The District will coordinate with you in future burn projects to insure that range improvements are protected and other resources are properly accounted for.

We were not able to initiate NEPA for the allotment in 2005, because of funding constraints. I am proposing that Hackberry/Pivot Rock be considered for NEPA initiation in 2007, and will let you know what the decision is as early as possible.

The attached document, *Mitigation for Chiricahua Leopard Frogs*, is part of the 2005 AOI for the Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment. You are expected to follow this mitigation during your time on the allotment.

Clifford, this AOI covers all the topics discussed during your grazing application meeting and several subsequent meetings that have followed to date. If you have further questions please contact Jerry Bradley at his office (928) 203-7537 or cell phone (928) 821-2774.

Sincerely,

/s/ Larry Sears

LARRY G. SEARS
District Ranger

cc: Carol Boyd, Forest Stewardship Staff Officer,
Ken Anderson, District Ranger Red Rock Ranger District,
Jerry Bradley, Range Staff, Red Rock Ranger District,
Matt Atencio, Range Management Specialist, Peaks Ranger District,

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment AOI 2005

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment AOI 2005

Allotment Name: **HACKBERRY / PIVOT ROCK**

Year: **2005**

Pasture Name	Graze Period Planned	Graze Period Actual	Livestock Numbers	*Plant Growth	**Before Livestock	**After Livestock	**End of Growing Season	**Key Species	% Use on Key Area	LMP Mgmt Area
MAIN COW HERD										
HACKBERRY	3/26-4/30		285					Bogr/Hibe	50	11
DORENS	5/1-5/10		285					Bogr/Hibe	50	11
BASIN	5/11-5/23		340					Bogr/Hibe	50	11
PARTNERSHIP	5/24-5/26		340					Bogr/Bocu	50	7
SANDROCK	5/27-5/31		340					Bogr/Bocu	50	3/7
CALLOWAY	6/1-6/15		340					Pofe/Muwr	50	3
TOMS CREEK	6/16- 7/10		340					Kocr	50	3
WEST BED BUG	7/11-7/15		340					Bogr	50	3
NECK #1	7/16-7/21		340					Pofe/Muwr	50	3
NECK # 2-3	7/22-7/31		340					Pofe/Muwr	50	3
BALD MESA (ALL)	8/1-8/16		340					Bogr	50	3
SHIPPING	8/17-8/19		340					Pofe/Muwr	50	3
DRY LAKE	8/20-8/24		340					Muwr	50	3
CLEAR CREEK	8-25-8/26		340					Phpr/Pofe	50	3
MILLER	8/27-9/7		340					Phpr/Pofe	50	3
KEHL	9/8-10/4		340					Phpr/Pofe	50	3
CLEAR CREEK	10/5-10/6		340					Phpr/Pofe	50	3
DRY LAKE	10/7-10/9		340					Muwr	50	3
EAST BED BUG	10/10-10/17		340					Bogr/Bocu	50	3
SANDROCK	10/18-10/24		340					Bogr/Bocu	50	3/7
BASIN	10/25-11/8		340					Bogr/Hibe	50	11
PHRONEY	11/9-11/12		340					Bogr/Hibe	50	11
HACKBERRY	11/13-12/15		340					Bogr/Hibe	50	11
BULL RUN	12/16-1/18		340					Hibe	50	11
LOWER TOWEL	1/19-2/22		340					Hibe	50	11
MIDDLE TOWELL	2/23-3/4		340					Hibe	50	11

*D = Dormant S = Slow Growth F = Fast Growth
 **N = NO USE (0-10%) L = LIGHT USE (11-25) M = MODERATE USE (26-50%) H = HEAVY USE (51%-70%) E = EXTREME USE (71+ %)

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment AOI 2005

Allotment Name: HACKBERRY / PIVOT ROCK

Year: 2005

Pasture Name	Graze Period Planned	Graze Period Actual	Livestock Numbers	*Plant Growth	**Before Livestock	**After Livestock	**End of Growing Season	**Key Species	% Use on Key Area	LMP Mgmt Area
HEIFER HERD										
PIPELINE	1/24-3/15		55					Bogr/Hibe	50	11
TEEPEE	3/16-3/27		55					Bogr/Hibe	50	11
DOG LEG	3/28-4/10		55					Bogr/Hibe	50	11
LADDERS	4/11-5/11		55					Bogr/Hibe	50	11

***D** = Dormant **S** = Slow Growth **F** = Fast Growth

****N** = No use (0-10%) **L** = Light use (11-25) **M** = Moderate Use (26-50%) **H** = Heavy Use (51%-70%) **E** = Extreme Use (71+ %)

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment AOI 2005

Allotment Name: Hackberry/Pivot Rock (Key Area Monitoring)

Year: 2005

Pasture Name	Graze Period Planned	Graze Period Actual	Livestock Numbers	*Plant Growth	**Before Livestock	**After Livestock	**End of Growing Season	**Key Species	% Use on Key Area	LMP Mgmt Area
Pasture (MA Description)										
MILLER (Riparian)	8/27-9/7							Popr/Phpr		12
MILLER (Ponderosa Pine < 40 %)	8/27-9/7							Mumo/Fear		3
KEHL (Mtn Grassland)	9/8-10/4							Bogr		9
KEHL (Aspen)	9/8-10/4							Sedge		5
Pasture (MA Description)										
HUFFER (Riparian)	Non-Use							Popr/Phpr		12
EAST BEDBUG (Mtn Grassland)	10/10-10/17							Bogr		9
POTATO SOUTH (Aspen)	Non-Use							Sedge		5
POTATO NORTH (Ponderosa Pine < 40 %)	Non-Use							Mumo/Fear		3

***D** = Dormant **S** = Slow Growth **F** = Fast Growth

****N** = No use (0-10%) **L** = Light use (11-25) **M** = Moderate Use (26-50%) **H** = Heavy Use (51%-70%) **E** = Extreme Use (71+ %)

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment AOI 2005

Mitigation for the Mexican Spotted Owl and Peregrine Falcon On Grazing Allotments for Annual Operating Instructions

The purpose of the mitigation measures is to improve and protect habitat for prey species such as birds and small mammals in sensitive areas, and to protect nesting birds from disturbance associated with gathering or construction activities. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Follow these guidelines to meet the intent of the grazing guidelines listed in the Mexican Spotted Owl Recovery Plan:
 - a. Continue to monitor grazing use by livestock and wildlife in "key grazing" areas such as riparian areas (MA12), meadows (MA9), pine/oak types (MA3), and aspen (MA5). If cattle show an increasing utilization trend, then change management strategies to reduce the trend. If wild ungulates show an increasing utilization trend, the Forest Service will work with the Game and Fish Department to reduce this trend.
 - b. Continue to implement and enforce grazing utilization standards to attain good to excellent range conditions in "key areas" over time.
 - c. Continue to restore good conditions to degraded riparian communities by maintaining or promoting three age classes in woody vegetation. If the mid-age class is absent, 5% utilization or less is required to promote three structural stages. If all three classes are present, utilization of 20% or less of woody vegetation is acceptable.
2. To reduce animal concentrations and trampling of vegetation which may impact prey species forage and cover, follow these guidelines for placing salt, mineral blocks or food supplements.
 - a. Do not place these items in riparian areas, mountain meadows, or non riparian drainages in ponderosa pine unless being used for a watershed restoration project.
 - b. Do not place these items in spotted owl habitat or near peregrine falcon nesting areas. The attached map shows areas (shown as mitigation) where salt, supplemental feeding, or mineral blocks should not occur.
 - c. Rotate salt and mineral supplement sites regularly.
3. To eliminate potentially disturbing activities in spotted owl habitat or near peregrine nesting areas during their breeding season, do not allow the following types of activities in areas displayed in red on the map between March 1 and August 31 without prior consultation with the District Range Staff.
 - a. Spring branding or fall gathering.
 - b. Construction activities such as; new construction of fences, corrals, or buildings, or cleaning or construction of tanks.

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment AOI 2005

Additional Mitigation for the Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment.

Specific Measures by Allotment to avoid placing salt in Mexican spotted owl PAC's.

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment

<i>Pasture</i>	<i>Mitigation for salting</i>
Potato North	Salt at tanks only, but not within .5 miles of Potato Lake Draw
Potato South	Salt at tanks only, but not within .5 miles of Potato Lake Draw
Bald 1	No salt
Bald 3	No salt
Bald 4	No salt east of 136A or 136B roads
West Bedbug	Salt only east of Cart Cabin Tank
Kehl	No salt in T12N, R10E, Sections 4, 9, and 33
Toms	No salt in T13N, R9E, Section 28
Sandrock	No salt within 1/8 mile of Horsetank Wash
Miller	No salt in T12N, R10E, Section 33
Clear Creek	Salt only at tanks
Twenty-Seven Mile	No salt within 1/8 mile of Horsetank Wash
Horse Pasture	Salt in private land only

Do not place salt blocks in the south half of the Kehl pasture to reduce animal concentrations and trampling of vegetation which may impact prey species cover near the Webber eyrie.

Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotment AOI 2005

Mitigation For Chiricahua Leopard Frogs

Live fish, crayfish, bullfrogs, leopard frogs, salamanders, or other aquatic organisms shall not be moved among livestock tanks or other aquatic sites.

If a site is identified as occupied by Chiricahua leopard frogs, water shall not be hauled to the site from another aquatic site or tank that supports leopard frogs, bullfrogs, crayfish, or fish. When water is needed, such as for a bentonite application, all precautions shall be taken (use of fish screens of 1/8 inch or smaller mesh and adding bleach or use of municipal water source) to ensure that fish, bullfrogs, and their tadpoles, and crayfish are not moved among tanks.

If the chytrid fungus is detected and/or leopard frogs are found on the allotment, the permittee shall take precautions to minimize disease transmission and translocation of aquatic organisms. We recommend that these measures be used whether or not we know that chytrid fungus or frogs are present. All equipment (front-end loader, shoes, waders, shovels, fence posts, etc.) used at an aquatic site shall be flushed clean of all dirt, mud, and debris, rinsed in a ten percent bleach solution, and allowed to thoroughly dry before coming into contact with another aquatic site.

All ranch hands, construction personnel, and others implementing the proposed action shall be given a copy of these terms and conditions, and informed of the need to comply with them.

At least 60 days prior to maintaining or cleaning out livestock tanks, the permittee shall inform the Coconino of planned activities. Authorized personnel shall survey the tank for Chiricahua leopard frogs and if frogs are found, shall work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop and implement a plan to minimize take of frogs. Measures to minimize take should include salvage and temporary holding of frogs, limiting disturbance and work areas to the minimum area practicable, leaving stands of emergent vegetation in place, and/or measures to minimize the likelihood of disease transmission. Plans to minimize take shall be approved by the USFWS.